

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01

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R 081044Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1415
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
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CINCPAC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VIENTIANE 8301

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, EAID, LA, UR

SUBJECT: LAO SPOKESMAN REPORTS ON NOVEMBER 7 CABINET MEETING

1. PGNU SPOKESMAN OUDAY SOUVANNAVONG HELD PRESS CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 8 TO REPORT ON PREVIOUS DAY'S CABINET MEETING. HE NOTED THAT PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA HAD PRESIDED FOR 30 MINUTES OF THREE-HOUR SESSION AND HAD PRAISED CABINET FOR ITS GOOD WORK DURING HIS ABSENCE. SOUVANNA REPORTEDLY SAID HE WOULD DEPART VIENTIANE NOVEMBER 14 FOR STAY OF "ONE OR TWO MONTHS" IN LUANG PRABANG AND ASKED THAT CABINET MEET WITH HIM THERE TWICE A MONTH, WITH DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PHOUMI VONGVICHIT TO PRESIDE AT INTERVENING ROUTINE MEETINGS IN VIENTIANE.

2. SOVIET AID AGREEMENT: OUDAY SAID CABINET HAD DECIDED TO "REVIEW" USSR-LAOS AID AGREEMENT OF 1962, SPECIFICALLY TO DETERMINE WHETHER USSR WAS STILL WILLING TO BUILD 150- OR 200-BED HOSPITAL PROJECTED FOR VIENTIANE.

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IF SO, PGNU WOULD NOW LIKE HOSPITAL TO BE BUILT IN LUANG

PRABANG, BECAUSE VIENTIANE ALREADY HAS ADEQUATE HOSPITAL FACILITIES (SEE ALSO VIENTIANE 8280). IN RESPONSE TO REPORTERS' QUESTIONS, OUDAY RECALLED THAT OTHER MAJOR PROVISIONS OF 1962 AGREEMENT, LIKEWISE NEVER IMPLEMENTED, WERE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF 50-KILOWATT RADIO TRANSMITTER IN VIENTIANE AND 25,000-KILOWATT HYDROELECTRIC POWER PLANT IN SAM NEUA PROVINCE.

3. VISIT OF THAI FOREIGN MINISTER: OUDAY SAID CABINET HAD EXPRESSED PLEASURE AT VISIT AND ANNOUNCED THAT COMMUNIQUE WOULD BE ISSUED AT ITS CONCLUSION.

4. PGNU TO SETTLE STUDENT STRIKE IN PAKSE: OUDAY SAID CABINET HAD DECIDED TO SEND DELEGATION FROM PGNU SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS (ESTABLISHED BY DECREE IN SEPTEMBER 1974) TO SETTLE THE STUDENT STRIKE IN PAKSE (VIENTIANE 8245, NOTAL). DELEGATION'S FIRST MEETING WITH STRIKING STUDENTS WAS TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE MORNING OF NOVEMBER 8.

5. NEW BANK NOTE: FINALLY, OUDAY ANNOUNCED THAT CABINET HAD DECIDED TO AUTHORIZE ISSUANCE OF A NEW 5,000-KIP BANK NOTE. HE ASKED MEDIA REPS TO EXPLAIN CAREFULLY TO READERS AND LISTENERS THAT THIS STEP WAS NOT A CONCESSION TO INFLATION AND WOULD NOT AGGRAVATE INFLATIONARY PRESSURES; IT WAS MERELY A CONVENIENCE TO PUBLIC AND SHOULD ALLEVIATE CHRONIC SHORTAGES OF SMALLER-DENOMINATION NOTES. (COMMENT: LARGEST NOTE IN CIRCULATION AT PRESENT IS 1,000-KIP, WORTH LESS THAN U.S. \$1.00 AT CURRENT CURB-MARKET RATE. ISSUANCE OF A 5,000-KIP NOTE IS LONG OVERDUE; IDEA HAS BEEN KICKED AROUND FOR SEVERAL YEARS BUT, FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL REASONS, NOT IMPLEMENTED UNTIL NOW.) WHITEHOUSE

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